



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Let's Talk Advising First-Year Students

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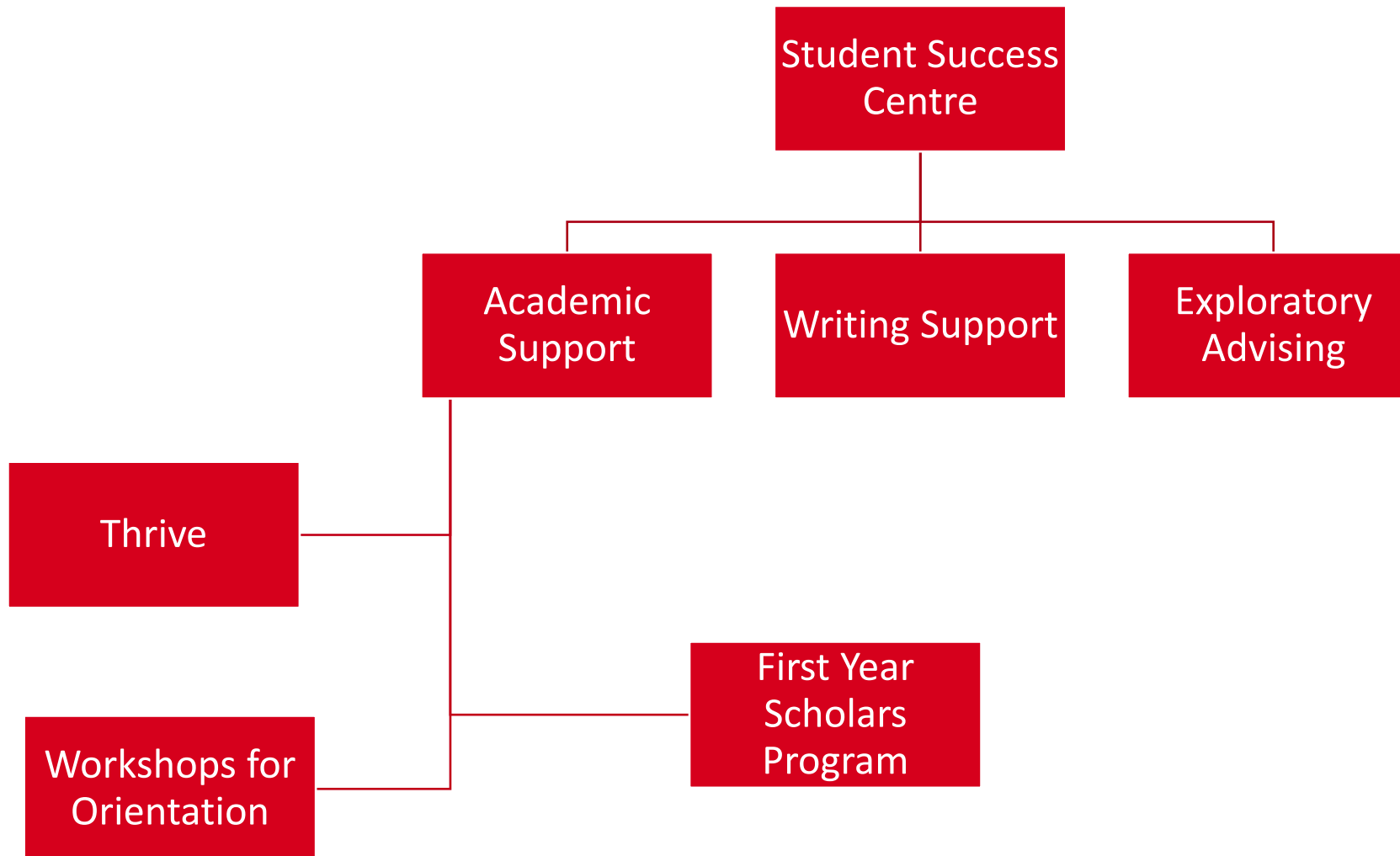
Session Goals

Supporting first-year students

Share
ideas

Build
community

My Interactions with First-Year Students



First Year Scholars (FYS)

An **interdisciplinary community** that provides **high-achieving, incoming students** with an opportunity to engage in **advising appointments, workshops, and events** focused on **learning and leadership**. In this program, students receive **tailored support** from the Student Success Centre to help them reach their goals at UCalgary and beyond.

When I look back over my first year at university, I will know I was successful if I...

- Received **good grades**
- Achieved **balance**
- Met my **goals**
- Found **enjoyment** in my program
- Have a **plan** for future years
- **Connected** with others; made friends
- Got **involved**

Trends in First-Year Advising Challenges

- Managing time effectively
- Finding ways to get involved
- Applying effective study strategies
- Adapting to different class/test modalities
- Building capacity for wellness
- Understanding program requirements

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

During this academic year (21/22), which of these challenges have you most commonly advised first-years on? Rank from most (1) to least (6).



What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

understanding canadian education expectations

Not as academically prepared.

homesickness

Not liking online studying

Understanding budget and what it means to be school ready

Lack of engagement

Online, hybrid, inperson learning differences

students are overwhelmed

Need more resources for support (mental health, more substantive study solutions, etc.)

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

When/how to register.

they find the course loads very high

Struggling with classes, more withdrawals.

Balancing work life and school

lack of interest in engaging because classes are online

Lack study skills

mental health - dealing with information overload with lower capacity to cope

knowing how to communicate in a professional/education setting

Actually getting meetings booked and building relationships with students while online instead of on campus

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

Finances

Giving up on taking classes "because they are too hard" with out using any resources or contacting instructors etc.

Not knowing the institution's academic policies

Connecting with other students in meaningful ways, specially for online courses.

whether a student could continue online classes (not distance education)

Not feeling like they have a community

Students in 3rd year who have never been to campus.

knowing how to find the resources that the university offers

Struggling which course to take

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

Stress, too much course load

not liking their instructors/professors

Not understanding in-campus education expectations because of their experience in the last year

Managing student expectations. COVID required lots of flexibility, now we are returning to more structure

They are very unsure of themselves and feel that they are "behind" (compare selves to others or have a perfectionist mindset).

Financial issues

Knowledge gaps from disrupted HS courses (due to COVID)

Shock, given their new environment.

anxiety about covid and in-person learning

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

Finding a balance of work, school, life
Don't know what questions to ask
Unfamiliar of resources available

becoming isolatory in not wanting to come to campus anymore

First-year international students tend to think education system in Canada are the same with their home countries. For example, registration, declaration (some countries don't have such system).

Concerns over their family members' (covid-related) sickness

Finances: not checking or confirming some essential things, which in-turn has an affect on concentration and mental wellness.

Understanding Post Sec systems
Finding out they are in a program that doesn't suit them and how to make a change

Not having enough volunteering opportunities available

Asking for help late in the term, understanding grading system (international students), what being on probation means.

"Why am I paying for this"...online, lack of help

What other challenges have you noticed recently while supporting first-year students?

Online learning under the roof of their parents = more helicopter influence

managing hybrid schedules, testing + for covid when expected to be inperson

Overwhelmed by info, and missing important deadlines.
International with other first-languages = more challenges.
More peer mentors could help?



Discussion Time

In breakout groups, **choose a challenge** from our menti exercise to discuss in more detail. As a group:

1. Introduce yourselves

2. Discuss the challenge:

- What specific things are you noticing related to this challenge?
- E.g. Managing time effectively: many students aren't engaging in big-picture planning and reverse engineering.

3. Share best practices or brainstorm solutions for addressing this challenge.

- E.g. Offering workshops on big-picture planning in the summer; having templates and examples available for students.

Pick one person to record your main ideas and be ready to share.

Thank you!

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